V. BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—DISCUSSION *RE*

Raja MUTHIAH CHETTIAR of Chettinad :—" I would like to know the programme of the House. I think, hon. Members who have been sitting so patiently throughout the debate will require some reward. I understand that on Monday it is proposed to go through the Moratorium Bill. I would like to submit that the Moratorium Bill may not be finished on Monday. If it is not going to be finished on Monday, would it not be advisable for this House to adjourn to-day in view of the Pongal festival coming so shortly? Several of the Members who have come here have told me that they would be very happy to leave for their homes for Pongal. Personally speaking, I have no inconvenience.

" I would like to submit to the Government that the Moratorium Bill is a very serious question. Many hon. Members feel that it should go through a Select Committee. There are very many defects in it. I am sure, if these are pointed out the Hon. the Chief Minister would be very glad to consider them. After all we are accustomed to Ordinances, and we are all living in the days of Ordinances. What does it matter, Sir, if one Ordinance is replaced by another Ordinance after the Assembly is adjourned? "

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The present Ordinance will cease to have effect on a particular day unless the Madras Indebted Agriculturists (Temporary Relief) Bill is passed."

Raja MUTHIAH CHETTIAR of Chettinad :—" I can understand the procedure, Sir. After we adjourn, the Assembly can be prorogued and another Ordinance can be issued. I just want to say that I am not against this Bill. Let not hon. Members understand that I, sitting behind the Hon. Chief Minister, am not likely to oppose the Bill at all. As a matter of fact, I have no . . ."

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Hence this indirect procedure ! "

Raja MUTHIAH CHETTIAR of Chettinad :—" We always credit the Hon. the Chief Minister with great shrewdness and we could never miss that shrewdness. He has understood the point very shrewdly. He is such a good person, otherwise how is it possible to express our views? In a polite manner we have to bring to his notice our inconveniences. This Bill seeks to give relief to poor cultivators. I wish to point out to hon. Members of this House that agriculturists are not going to be helped much as a result of the passing of this Bill. Only big landowners are going to be benefited by this Bill. If the Government want to give relief to the tenants, the Bill will have to be amended suitably. You know, Sir, that amendments cannot be properly moved and considered on the floor of this House. There is one other matter which I wish to bring to the notice of

9th January 1954] [Raja Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad]

hon. Members. The Bill has already resulted in the freezing of credit facilities. The scheduled banks are already refusing to give loans to agriculturists. This Bill helps only rich people. I may give also another example as to how this Ordinance operates. A ginning factory owner owning a couple of acres of land can defer payment of a loan of two lakhs of rupees which he has borrowed for the purpose of running the factory as a result of the protection given in the Ordinance.''

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—'' The hon. Member is giving his opinion about the Bill and that cannot be allowed now.''

RAJA MUTHIAH CHETTIAR OF CHETTINAD :—'' I am not giving any opinion about the Bill. I would request hon. Members not to act as barristers or solicitors for the Treasury Bench. It is most reprehensible and I object to it.''

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—'' I submit, Sir, the hon. Member who has just spoken was saying in an insinuating language that the Members on this side of the House . . . ''

MR. SPEAKER :—'' The Members of the Opposition are representing only themselves.''

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—'' We are now concerned about meeting on Monday or not.''

RAJA MUTHIAH CHETTIAR OF CHETTINAD :—'' I would like to submit that I am not going into the merits of the Bill. I have been sufficiently long in the House and I know the procedure of the House. No one can mistake it. The Hon. Chief Minister, the Hon. Leader of the House and you yourself, Sir, will bear testimony to my experience. I am not likely to commit even a small mistake. I would submit again, Sir, that the Moratorium Bill is a far-reaching one and even the intention of the Government in introducing the Bill cannot be carried out by rushing it through all the stages on Monday. It may be that the Bill may be put on the Statute Book for a period of one year. But what guarantee is there that it will no be extended year after year? ''

* THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—'' The hon. Member is no doubt entitled to claim experience and therefore he knows the rule that he should not go into the merits of the Bill. While even saying and admitting that, he is going too far into the merits of the Bill. In fact I want to take the earliest opportunity to make it clear that this Bill does not intend to wipe out any obligations or debts. The very object of the Bill, as has been explained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, is that on account of the harvests expected—particularly this year has been a good year for harvest—we want to give some more time to the people. Meanwhile the hon. Member is anticipating the whole position and probably prejudicing the position which I do not wish him to do. The whole question is whether we meet on Monday or not. When we meet and take up this Bill, it is open for the hon. Member to give his opinion, as to what we shall do with the Bill.

[Sri C. Rajagopalachari] [9th January 1954

"I should like to mention why I press that we should sit on Monday. If we disperse now, and as the hon. Member suggests, and as it would indeed become necessary in the position created to ask the Governor to prorogue both the Houses and issue a new Ordinance, it can be considered as a very illegitimate use of powers. There is one Ordinance and to replace it by another Ordinance in the same terms, whatever be the minor changes, would not be quite proper when it was possible for the House to sit on Monday and discuss the matter. I submit it would be improper for the Government to be a party to postponing the consideration of the Bill and proroguing the Houses at the same time. We must, therefore, meet on Monday and do what is right and proper on that day."

6-30 p.m. RAJA MUTHIAH CHETTIAR OF CHETTINAD :—"I am not indulging in dilatory tactics. My only feeling is that if we are to start discussing the Bill on Monday, we will not be able to finish the clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill inasmuch as there are numerous amendments in respect of each clause. Therefore what is the alternative left than proroguing the Legislature, immediately after the close of the session on Monday? That is why I pleaded that it would be by far better to adjourn the House *sine die* today itself rather than discuss the Bill indefinitely on Monday and then prorogue the Legislature for passing another Ordinance."

* THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—"With due deference to the Raja Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, I would request him to keep a more open mind than he is doing now. He should not imagine things. He does not understand my difficulty. He must make up his mind to understand the difficulty of Government and not think only of his own view point. Our difficulty is that if we put off all other things and once for all decide even now that the House should be prorogued, which course ought to be adopted if we adjourn today without discussing the Moratorium Bill and once for all decide to issue another Ordinance, it would be considered improper. We would be opening ourselves to serious objection. Whereas if on Monday we meet and then submit to the circumstances that may be presented, if we really find it impossible to finish consideration of the Bill, then we could at least say that we tried to get the Bill through the House; decided to put it off; such a course would be less improper and a little more proper than adjourning today itself."

RAJA MUTHIAH CHETTIAR OF CHTTINAD :—"Mr. Speaker . . ."

MR. SPEAKER :—"I am going to adjourn the House now. The House is now adjourned and will meet again at 9 o'clock on Monday, 11th January 1954."

The House then adjourned.